

8 Americans On Axis Radio Indicted Here For Treason

Part 7-27-43

Ezra Pound, Poet;
Kaltenbach, Best
And 'Paul Revere'

Among Accused

Mr. Hays, Baltimore
Indictments charging treason, an offense which may carry the death penalty, were returned yesterday by the District grand jury against eight Americans, six of whom are said to be still preaching the Axis hate-gospel over the short-wave radio stations of Germany and Italy.

The eight indictments which name as defendants a poet once renowned for his artistry, five other men and two women, charge that they "treasonably did adhere to the enemies of the United States, giving to the said enemies aid and comfort within the United States and elsewhere . . . by repeated broadcasts of propaganda designed to persuade citizens of the United States to decline to support the United States in the conduct of the war."

2 Women Among Them

Those indicted are:

Dr. Ezra Pound, 57, poet and musician, who has repeatedly stated that he despises democracy and loves the fascism of Italy, from which he broadcasts and where he is highly touted by the government.

Robert H. Best, 47, journalist and former central European correspondent for the United Press, who is called by his radio announcers, the "famous journalist of America."

Frederick W. Kaltenbach, 48, formerly of Dubuque, Iowa, self-styled "American Lord Haw Haw," once a public school teacher, fired for organizing a brownshirt-type organization among his students.

Douglas Chandler, 54, described as once socially prominent in Baltimore, who is known over the short-wave as "Paul Revere."

Edward Leo DeLaney, 57, who,

FCC officials say, hasn't been heard over the radio for six months, a former bit player in the theater; radio name, "E. D. Ward."

Constance Drexel, 48, whose pretense to kinship with the socially prominent Philadelphia family was discounted when it was learned she was born in Germany, stopped broadcasting six months ago when one of her broadcasts was rebroadcast from the United States to Germany to show feeble propaganda.

Jane Anderson, 50, former correspondent for the London Daily Mail, sentenced in 1938 by the Spanish Loyalists to die as a spy, pretends to be a Catholic.

Action Cited as Warning

Max Otto Koischwitz, 41, born in Germany but naturalized in 1935, former professor of German at Hunter College, New York City, broadcasts as "Mr. O. K."

Dr. Pound broadcasts from Rome, but all the rest use various German radio stations for their work. The Justice Department spent a year investigating the defendants before the indictments were sought here.

Speaking of these indictments, Attorney General Biddle stated that they should be a warning that the United States "will not tolerate traitors at home or abroad," and promised that the accused would be brought to trial before a jury of fellow citizens "whom they

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are charged with betraying" as soon as apprehended.

Should they be convicted, they would be subject to the death penalty, or, at the discretion of the court, a sentence of five years in jail and a fine of \$10,000.

Biddle further stated:

"It should be clearly understood that these indictments are based not only on the content of the propaganda statements—the lies and falsifications which were uttered—but also on the simple fact that these people have freely elected, at a time when their country is at war, to devote their services to the cause of the enemies of the United States. They have betrayed the first and most sacred obligation of American citizenship."

The indictments, all similar, state that the defendants accepted employment with the Italian and German governments, wrote and broadcast speeches and statements deliberately intended to weaken the national morale, and in various ways to weaken the war effort.

The local court was given venue in the case because their broadcasts were heard by monitoring bureaus centered in the District of Columbia. It was said that the witnesses before the grand jury were mostly persons who had known the defendants before the war and were able to recognize their voices as recorded by the Foreign Broadcast Intelligence Service of the Federal Communications Commission.

The indictments were returned to Justice James W. Marris. Presentation to the grand jury was made by Jesse Climenko and Samuel C. Ely, special assistants to the attorney general, and by United States Attorney Edward M. Curran.